

North Middlesex Regional Schools

Dear Parent or Guardian,

All Massachusetts public schools must include a verbal substance use preventive screening as part of their yearly mandated universal health-screening programs. Our district will use the Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) protocol with students in grades (7 & 9). Students will be asked 4 questions in private. Then there will be a one-on-one conversation between each student and a school nurse or counselor. The purpose of this effort is to prevent, or at least delay, alcohol, marijuana or other drug use. The SBIRT program reinforces healthy decisions and addresses concerns about substance use to improve health, safety and success in school.

We will use the CRAFFT II screening tool, the most commonly used substance use screening tool for adolescents. All screenings will be held in private one-on-one sessions with one of the specially trained nurses or counselors. Students who are not using substances will have their healthy choices reinforced. When any student reports using alcohol or other drugs, or seems at risk for future substance use, the screener will ask 5 more questions, provide brief feedback and have a brief conversation with that student.

- **What your child tells the screener is confidential and will not be shared with any other person without prior written consent of the student, parent, or guardian, except in cases of immediate medical emergency or when disclosure is otherwise required by state law.**
- **No written record of the results of this verbal screening are kept with information that identifies any individual student.**
- **Screening results will not be put with any other information that identifies any child.**
- **Screening results will not be included in your child's school record.**

School SBIRT Screening is:

- asking a short set of questions.

School SBIRT Screening is

NOT:

- a blood or urine test,
- a drug test, or
- a test of any body function.

If you want to opt your child out of the screening you can write to us any time before or during the screening. Your child may also opt out at the time of the screening. Please feel free to contact us with any questions, or if you would like your child to opt-out of the screening.

Together, schools and parents CAN make a difference for the youth in our community. One way to prevent youth alcohol and other drug use is to talk with your child about your thoughts and expectations about alcohol and drug use. You can view the CRAFFT II tool and other SBIRT resources on www.masbirt.org/schools website.

Regards,

School Principal